



Fact Sheet: UASI Funding Issue

BACKGROUND OF UASI

The Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) was created in response to the terrorist attacks of 9/11 to provide funds to selected urban areas to assist them in building an enhanced and sustainable capacity to prevent, respond to, and recover from threats or acts of terrorism. The UASI Grant Program addresses the unique equipment, training, planning, and exercise needs of large high threat urban areas. Program activities must involve coordination by the identified city, counties, and the respective State Administrative Agency (SAA).

While the city is not the sole beneficiary to the funding, the first responder agencies in the Region have benefited greatly from the equipment, training and planning that the Grant has funded. Other beneficiaries have been but not limited to non-profits and private industry.

UASI has been in place for nine years now. The "9/11 Act" (To provide for the implementation of the recommendations of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States) as enacted in 2007, effectively legislates funding for UASI through fiscal year 2012 and "such sums as are necessary for fiscal year 2013, and each fiscal year thereafter."

The UASI grant has provided the El Paso Region with equipment such as: chemical detectors, thermal imaging cameras, personal protective equipment, command units, generators, tactical ballistic helmets and vests, security systems, response vehicles, emergency notification system, medical cache for H1N1 pandemic, and many other projects. The grant has also provided the funding to help us coordinate exercises that ranged from interdepartmental tabletops to Agency wide EOC exercises to regional cross-discipline/multi-agency mock events. All of the exercises are then evaluated through After Action Reports, which are a necessary training tool to reflect our strengths and our weaknesses.

In addition, the grant has also funded training such as National Incident Management System (NIMS) training, Bomb Team Training, Hazmat Training, and other training/exercises deemed eligible on the grant.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

DHS grant programs in 2010 consisted of the following.

- State Homeland Security Program -	\$842 Million
- UASI -	832.5 Million
- Operation Stonegarden -	\$60 Million
- MMRS -	\$39.36 million
- Citizens Corps Program -	\$12.48 million
Total -	\$1.726 Billion

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- El Paso area communities have all benefited from the regional UASI by significantly increasing their capabilities, by allowing for the purchase of equipment and training in real time scenarios based on DHS's National Planning Scenarios and Target Capabilities Lists.
- The UASI Grants have brought together like never before the numerous public safety agencies in our county region. The agencies routinely meet as an Urban Area Working Group (UAWG), which has greatly increased the coordination, collaboration, and cooperation.
- In 2007 El Paso was designated as a high population high threat urban area and subsequently awarded UASI funds. Since that time to this the critical infrastructure, population, population density, and threat that provided rationale for the inclusion of El Paso as UASI City have not only persisted, but also have grown that much more acute.
- El Paso is home to Fort Bliss one of the United States largest military bases and the Department of Defense's top ranked military asset. Fort Bliss is expected to add (estimated) over 30,000 soldiers and their families for a total impact of approximately 80,000 new residents by 2013. While Fort Bliss is a key piece of critical infrastructure, El Paso also has several international bridge crossings that witness millions of people enter and leave the United States over its international bridges from Juarez, Mexico on a yearly basis.
- Given El Paso's proximity to Ciudad Juarez of the State of Chihuahua Mexico, the security of the El Paso region continues to be a threat to the National Security of the United States. The El Paso/Juarez border area makes up the largest international community along the border of the United States exceeding 2.8 million people.
- El Paso has continued to gain national attention as the narcotics trafficking violence in Ciudad Juarez has escalated between drug cartels in recent years. Since 2008, Juarez has reported thousands of murders a year linked to narcotics, making Ciudad Juarez, the deadliest city in North America.

Given that the federal budget cycle runs behind that of the City of El Paso's, the 2011 UASI funds that are being cut have never been granted or received by the City. The City has been a designated UASI recipient since 2007 and has received 21.8 million since the program's inception. Since the UASI grants have a 36 month life cycle, the city will continue to utilize grant funds from 2008 - 2010. While the 2011 funding news is certainly bad news, the impact of the loss will have its most severe effects in future years.

UASI 2007 - \$5.82 million
UASI 2008 - \$5.6 million
UASI 2009 - \$5.38 million
UASI 2010 - \$5.0 million